

APPROVED AS AMENDED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

**TOWN OF DARIEN
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 19, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: First Selectwoman Evonne Klein; Linda Santarella;
Barbara Thorne; Kevin Newman; Susan Young

STAFF: John Crary, Administrative Officer

OTHERS: John Wayne Fox, Town Counsel

CALL TO ORDER

First Selectwoman Klein called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public.

FIRST SELECTWOMAN'S REPORT

The First Selectwoman reported that she met with SWRPA last week to review the scope of the Route 1 access and circulation study. She reported that the Steering Committee will consist of a representative from CDOT, SWRPA, Gary Pavia and herself and they identify the stakeholders and then there will be ample time and opportunities for stakeholder input. She stated that this was in the beginning stages and she will update the Board regularly on it.

She reported that she met with the Friends of Animals today who expressed their disappointment with the process the Town followed with respect to the deer cull. They felt that they have information that would have been useful in the decision making process. Ms. Klein stated that this issue was in both local newspapers a number of times and the public was also given the opportunity to attend a public hearing by the Parks and Recreation Department.

She reported that she attended the Police Commission meeting this evening to address and discuss various traffic matters. She reported that the feeling was that the weekend traffic went well and there were not too many traffic flow problems downtown. She reported that there will be traffic agents downtown this week to help with the pedestrian

traffic. She reported that she brought forth a request from the Sylvan Road neighborhood for speed bumps. Mr. Newman stated that there were too many speed bumps in Town. Ms. Klein replied that it was up to the Police Commission to address this.

Ms. Klein reported that she met with Operations Planning Committee last week to discuss the Board of Education contract.

Ms. Klein reported that Kate Clarke Buch is compiling a list of capital projects scheduled for the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance and Board of Education. She reported that they are merging the Board of Education's approved plan which extends to 2013 and the Board of Selectmen's 6 year plan.

Ms. Klein reported that she is sending a letter tomorrow to the Army Corps of Engineers to get things moving regarding the dredging and restoration of Holly Pond. Ms. Klein said that Darien partnered with Stamford to get funding for dredging. She stated that they have an opportunity to get funding to do a complete study and identify all of the options regarding the next steps. She stated that at some point the Town will need to put money in the budget to support this endeavor.

Mrs. Klein added memo to waive requirements for competitive bidding on steps to Weed Beach Platform tennis courts. Mrs. Young asked cost of project. Mr. Crary said that they hired someone to complete the work for \$9,300. The only bid/cost they received was for \$12,000. The stairs are collapsing and it poses a threat of injury.

Ms. Klein reported that the tour of the Town went well and she received positive feedback on it. She reported that they saw a number of different projects and will see what gets proposed in the upcoming budget.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Mr. Crary reported that they have begun the budget season and all departments are in the process of putting together capital proposals. He reported that in early January they will spend time reviewing department requests. He stated that a preliminary budget will be presented in late January.

SENIOR CENTER TASK FORCE REPORT

Ms. Klein requested that agenda item (d) be moved up on the agenda to be heard at this time.

- ** MS. YOUNG MOVED TO HEAR AGENDA ITEM (D) - PRELIMINARY REPORT OF SENIOR CENTER TASK FORCE.**
- ** MS. THORNE SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

NEW BUSINESS

d) Preliminary Report of Senior Center Task Force

Mr. Craig Curtis, Chairman of the Senior Center Task Force, stated that last June the Task Force was appointed to review the Senior Center. He reported that there were nine members who met every Wednesday, and their charge was to recommend a course of action based on the existing building's condition, the program needs of the seniors, and whether to build a new Senior Center or renovate the old. He reported that the Task Force recommended engaging the services of architect, Robert Young. He stated that they received three proposals for a design feasibility study to rehabilitate the existing Senior Center at the present location at a cost of \$30,000 and would need an allocation of \$3.7 Million for the rehabilitation of the building.

Mr. Curtis also recommended that the Board consider an outside charge to consider a form of land use policy for the unused portion of the Senior Center property. He continued by stating that a structural engineer had determined that the building was sound and could be rehabilitated and could last another 50 years. He also noted that the asbestos study came back normal for age of building. The study did not assess interior of walls or foundation. He reported that they evaluated the program needs as compared to other surrounding Towns and stated that they were strong. He reported that the Darien Senior Center was run mostly by volunteers compared to paid staff in other towns.

Mr. Curtis reported that an Adult Day Care would be required in the near future and they will need space for that program. He also noted that they visited three surrounding Senior Centers to look at their size and programs. Mr. Curtis concluded his report by stating that it was the recommendation of the majority of the Task Force to rehabilitate the existing Senior Center. He added that they need better demographics on the seniors due to the fact that the last survey was done in 2001.

Donna Berizzi representing the minority, stated that she visited three Senior Centers and looked at the demographics and she was not convinced that the size of the current building or land was necessary. She stated that she did not agree with the majority report and although she did not have a written report, she had the input of two other minority members.

Mr. Newman stated that he felt strongly about looking at the site itself. He commented that it was like looking at a chessboard without all the pieces. He stated that it has to be examined and he would not want to commit the funds unless they look at all the alternatives and expand their charge. Ms. Klein stated that the Board of Selectmen needed to decide whether to expand the charge because it was very narrow. She stated that this was the first step and the Board will take it under advisement and decide whether they want to proceed. Ms. Young asked to see the demographics of our own Senior Centers. Ms. Santarella stated that she supported the majority vote but as a member of the Board of Selectmen suggested that the Task Force come back to the Board if needed to amend the charge. She wanted the Board of Selectmen to realize that she brought to the attention of the Senior Center Task

Force that the Board of Selectmen was going to be evaluating all town properties. Mrs. Thorne asked if the building might be needed by the Board of Education. Mrs. Klein said no, that the Board of Education has been asked on several occasions, and they declined the need for the building.

Ms. Klein thanked the members of the Senior Center Task Force present and stated that this item will be placed on the Board's agenda in January to finish the discussion on it and to give the Board time to review the preliminary report.

b) Discuss and Take Action on request from Cathy Kapsimalis, 30 Point O'Woods Road, for funds to pay for dredging the pond on her property

Ms. Young stated that Town Counsel has made a recommendation and, as sympathetic as they are, it would be a precedent set with great monetary hardship to the Town in the future. Wayne Fox stated that he was at the site and that the Town was only a partial contributor to the sand situation and it would set a bad precedent to pay out in this situation. Ms. Santarella stated that there are over 70 ponds in Darien and that she could not justify it. She agreed with the advisement from Town Counsel.

Ms. Cathy Kapsimalis stated that the reason for the large accumulation of sand was due to poor maintenance of the catch basins in the last ten years that were not placed correctly by the Town.. She continued that the road was also oversanded in the last ten years. She stated that the cost to dredge the pond rose to \$3,788 with the additional cost of sand removal of \$2,000. The First Selectwoman reported that the Town no longer uses sand for snow removal and has gone to all salt. She stated that the Town will clean the catch basins every year and by not using sand should have an impact going forward. Ms. Klein stated that she had a conflict and disagreed with the Board's decision on this.

a) Report from Darien Revitalization Inc. (DRI)

Mr. Tom Geary and David Genovese gave a presentation on the Darien downtown revitalization. Mr. Geary noted the highlights in 2005 and stated that on June 20th they were accepted into the CT Main Street Program and on October 3rd, Deb Parnon started as the Executive Director of the DRI. Mr. Geary reported that some of the recent initiatives were that the DRI had formed a Board of Directors, elected Officers/Executive Committee and established four working Committees staffed by volunteers. He noted that the DRI now involves over 50 volunteers. He continued that they have received firm pledges and donations of nearly \$170,000 from 245 merchants, property owners and citizens, not including the Town's commitment of \$30,000. They have raised \$196,605 in funding in approximately 5 months which adequately cover the first year's operating budget of \$97,200. Mrs. Santarella asked Mr. Geary if they were requesting money this year. Mr. Geary said no, they are not asking money for 2—0=2007. Mrs. Santarella made it clear that the Board of Selectmen was putting together its budget and that is why she asked the question.

Ms. Young asked how Planning and Zoning could help move this forward. Mr. Geary replied that he was very pleased with them and they were doing an excellent job and were sending retailers to him to help find locations. Ms. Young asked if DRI has asked Planning and Zoning to revise the parking regulations and guidelines for outdoor dining. Mr. Geary stated that it was one of their goals. Mrs. Klein asked if it was time to write them another letter.

Mr. Newman asked how the Board could get involved and Mr. Geary replied that there will be a Vision Session planned in January in which the Town Boards will be invited to attend.

c) Discuss and Take Action on request of YWCA for a Push-n-Pull Parade on July 4th 2006

Ms. Santarella stated that this event was a huge success last year and thanked Nancy Coughlin. Ms. Coughlin asked for an additional request to try to find offsite parking.

- ** MS. SANTARELLA MOVED TO WAIVE THE PARKING REGULATIONS ON THE MECHANIC STREET LOT ON JULY 4, 2006 AND TO APPROVE THE REQUEST OF THE YWCA FOR A PUSH-N-PULL PARADE.**
- ** MS. THORNE SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Klein stated that this year the Town will be a sponsor of the event and will waive the fee for Tilly Pond.

e) Discuss the recommendation of the Advisory Commission on Coastal Waters for changes to the resolution that formed the Commission and changes to the Darien Charter involving coastal waters

Ms. Santarella stated that she was confused and did not understand the changes to the resolution. The Board agreed that this item will be deferred until the Advisory Commission on Coastal Waters comes to a meeting to explain the implications.

f) Discuss the recommendation of the Public Works Director, Bob Steeger, that the fee for street opening permits be raised to \$50

Mr. Newman stated that he did not feel that the increase was sufficient enough to cover the cost to the Town. He stated that it cost more than \$50 to go out to the site. Ms. Santarella noted that the fee had not been increased in 18 years. Mr. Crary stated that they were looking at all the fees. Mr. Newman proposed that the fee should be increased to \$100.00.

- ** MS. SANTARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE THAT THE FEE FOR STREET OPENING PERMIT BE INCREASED TO \$100.00.**

**** MS. THORNE SECONDED.**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

g) Discuss and Take Action on Board of Selectmen Priorities for 2006

The Board reviewed and made changes to the 2006 priorities. Ms. Klein stated that she will make the changes that were discussed and it will be placed on next month's agenda to be voted on.

Health Department

Funds are needed to cover the additional costs of the deer culling project, such as insurance rider \$667) and signage (\$433). These costs had not been anticipated when the 2005/06 budget was prepared.

h) Transfer:

RESOLVED:

That the following transfer of appropriations is approved for referral to the Board of Finance:

From:			To:		
Acct. No.	Account	Amount	Acct. No.	Account	Amount
10704000-86600	Contingency	1,100	10508011-82270	Deer Culling	1,100
TOTAL		1,100	TOTAL		1,100

Mr. Crary reported that this transfer was to pay for the balance of the deer culling. He stated the additional cost was for the insurance rider and signage around Selleck Woods.

**** MR. NEWMAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR APPROVAL TO THE BOARD OF FINANCE FROM ACCOUNT NUMBER 10704000-86600, CONTINGENCY, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,100, TO ACCOUNT NUMBER 10508011-82270, DEER CULLING, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,100.**
**** MS. YOUNG SECONDED.**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

i) Agenda Review

Ms. Klein reviewed the upcoming agenda items for the January 3rd meeting. Mr. Newman suggested that they should talk about the 5 Year Plan. Ms. Klein also reviewed future agenda items and noted they should talk about the 6 Year Plan.

APPOINTMENTS/REAPPOINTMENTS

a) Consider and take action on the following appointments:

- 1) Jon Olmstead (R) as a member of the Beautification Commission, for a term beginning on 12/1/04 and expiring on 11/30/07.**
- 2) Palmer Sparkman (R) as a member of the Advisory Commission on Coastal Waters, representing Delafield Island, for a term beginning on 2/16/05 and expiring on 2/15/07.**

**** MS. SANTARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING APPOINTMENTS:**

JON OLMSTEAD (R) AS A MEMBER OF THE BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION, FOR A TERM BEGINNING ON 12/1/04 AND EXPIRING ON 11/30/07 AND PALMER SPARKMAN (R) AS A MEMBER OF THE ADVISORY COMMISSION ON COASTAL WATERS, REPRESENTING DELAFIELD ISLAND, FOR A TERM BEGINNING ON 2/16/05 AND EXPIRING ON 2/15/07.

**** MS. THORNE SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

b) Consider and take action on the following reappointments Commission on Aging— Evans Kerrigan (R), Harriet Lechak (R), and Sal Giarrantana (R) for terms beginning on 4/1/05 and expiring on 3/31/08

**** MS. YOUNG MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING REAPPOINTMENTS - COMMISSION ON AGING— EVANS KERRIGAN (R), HARRIET LECHAK (R), AND SAL GIARRANTANA (R) FOR TERMS BEGINNING ON 4/1/05 AND EXPIRING ON 3/31/08**

**** MS. THORNE SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Executive Session Meeting of November 21, 2005

**** MS. SANTARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE SESSION MEETING OF NOVEMBER 21, 2005.**

**** MS. THORNE SECONDED.**

**** MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Special Meeting of November 29, 2005

- ** MS. SANTARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF NOVEMBER 29, 2005.**
- ** MR. NEWMAN SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Executive Session Meeting of December 5, 2005

- ** MR. NEWMAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE SESSION MEETING OF DECEMBER 5, 2005.**
- ** MS. YOUNG SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Regular Meeting of December 5, 2005

The following changes were made to the Minutes:

Pg. 3: Senior Center Task Force: Last sentence: Ms. Santarella read Part 4 of the charge of the Task Force to identify alternate sites if renovation is recommended.

Page 5: c) Seventh sentence: Change to Advisory Commission.

Eighth sentence: Change to: Mr. Newman said that the State was not requiring the Town to have affordable housing.

- ** MS. THORNE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 5, 2005 AS AMENDED.**
- ** MS. SANTARELLA SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

- January 3, 2006 Board of Selectmen meeting with Department Heads at 4:30 p.m.
- January 3, 2006 Board of Selectmen meeting at Conclusion of Meeting with Department Heads
- January 10, 2006 Board of Education Regular meeting at 7:30 p.m.
- January 17, 2006 Board of Selectmen Regular meeting at 7:00 p.m.
- January 17, 2006 Board of Finance Regular meeting at 7:45 p.m.

OTHER BUSINESS

(A two-thirds majority vote is required to add an item to the agenda)

Ms. Klein requested that an item be added to the agenda to reappoint Town Counsel.

**** MS. YOUNG MOVED TO ADD AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA TO
APPROVE THE REAPPOINT OF TOWN COUNSEL.**

**** MS. SANTARELLA SECONDED.**

**** MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** MS. THORNE MOVED TO APPROVE THE REAPPOINTMENT OF
JOHN WAYNE FOX AS TOWN COUNSEL**

**** MS. SANTARELLA SECONDED.**

**** MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** MS. SANTARELLA MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 10:05 P.M.**

**** MS. THORNE SECONDED.**

**** MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna DeVito
Telesco Secretarial Services